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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE AND IPA. NSC FOR ABRAMS/SINGH/PASCUAL.
JCS FOR LTG FRASER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/15/2018
TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PBTS](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [IS](#)
SUBJECT: MEVO HORON OUTPOST REMOVED

REF: JERUSALEM 635

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: PolOff visited the Mevo Horon Agricultural Farm Outpost April 15 and observed the removal of caravans from the site. Settlers at the scene told PolOff that they agreed with the MOD to evacuate the outpost in exchange for building permits for permanent homes in Mevo Horon settlement (reftel). There were no official Israeli presence at the site during the evacuation. The settlers said they wanted to evacuate quietly and on their own terms. The evacuation is the largest post-Annapolis GOI move against outposts, but involved only one family and six other individuals. Pictures at <http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/jerusalem>. END SUMMARY

Outpost gone: Low-key,
Independent operation

¶2. (C) PolOff visited the Mevo Horon Agricultural Farm outpost (north of the central West Bank Mevo Horon settlement) April 15 following press reports that the outpost was removed. PolOff and Israeli TV crews observed a crane lift the last of seven caravans onto a flatbed truck. Mevo Horon settler and founder of the Agricultural Farm outpost, David Goldberger said one family and six "singles" (including two of his sons), all farmers, lived at the outpost "until yesterday (April 14)," adding that press reports of twenty families being removed were incorrect. He said six caravans were removed April 14 and one April 15; three will move inside Mevo Horon settlement, and the rest "into storage." Mevo Horon Agricultural Farm is on Talia Sasson's list of post-March 2001 outposts and is believed to be on the GOI's list for its Roadmap commitments.

¶3. (C) Goldberger told PolOff that there were demolition orders against the outpost's caravans "for several years," and the voluntary removal resulted from a deal he made with MOD in exchange for building permits for permanent housing inside Mevo Horon settlement. He said he dealt with MOD Barak's representative Eitan Broshi and preferred to evacuate the outpost "quietly and on our own...without a show." Goldberger told PolOff the evacuation was organized, funded and executed by the outpost dwellers themselves under his guidance. PolOff observed no MOD, IDF, Israeli police, or settler activists at the site during the April 15 evacuation. "The press release did not come from my end", Goldberger said, referring to media coverage of the evacuation.

¶4. (C) Goldberger acknowledged that PolOff had visited Mevo Horon one week prior and that settlement leaders had refused to show him the outpost during the visit. He welcomed the April 15 visit and made an emotional presentation to PolOff, describing his sons' desire to farm the land in the area and

noting that Palestinians do not live in the area.

Yesha Council

Not Involved

15. (C) Yesha Council chairman Dani Dayan told PolOff April 15 that he did not know much about the evacuation, except that press reports of twenty families were incorrect. "It was just a few bachelors," he said. Dayan confirmed that the outpost occupants would move into Mevo Horon settlement. Goldberger said he had reached an agreement directly with MOD and involved no other parties, including the Yesha council. The acting head of the Mevo Horon settlement council told PolOff April 15 that she "had never been to the site" and the Council had "nothing to do with" the evacuation.

16. (C) COMMENT: The removal of settlers and seven caravans from Mevo Horon Agricultural Farm outpost is the most notable GOI action against outposts since Annapolis; previously the GOI had removed two uninhabited caravans near Ofra. However, the impact is limited, as it involves only one family and six other individuals. According to both the removed settlers and the Yesha Council, the removed settlers will relocate to permanent homes inside a nearby West Bank settlement (Mevo Horon). Both the settlement and the now-removed outpost are West of the separation barrier. Mevo Horon Agricultural Farm Outpost was populated by agricultural, non-ideological and mostly secular settlers, who don't identify with the "hilltop youth", were not likely to forcefully oppose the GOI and or otherwise rally the settler movement behind them.
WALLES